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GET YOUR GAME ON

Welcome to our first edition of **PADEL ZA** - the bi-monthly Digimag designed to inform, entertain and to keep you up to speed on all things padel!

With the padel craze sweeping across the country, our aim is to provide players and club owners with the ideal digital platform to share their views, share tips and broadcast important events, league fixtures, tournaments and results, so take advantage of the opportunity and send us your specific content for inclusion.

The interactive format of the Digimag allows for reader engagement, so feel free to send us relevant video clips to include, especially if they are of educational value. Together, we can strive to improve our game, boost our fitness levels, and of course, more importantly – have fun!

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VAMOS!

Liana



The Padel Explosion

Why the sport has taken off in SA

A racket sport combining the elements of tennis and squash, has taken the world by storm, and South Africa is no exception. We explore the reasons why...





Much like the rest of the world, the game of Padel is experiencing rapid growth in South Africa. With around 51 new clubs opening every week, the swift pace of growth mirrors the global trend, which recorded a 240 percent increase in padel courts worldwide between 2021 and 2024, according to the International Padel Federation (FIP). Internationally, the sport has gained popularity with a wide range of demographic groups. Even high-profile public figures such as David Beckham, Serena Williams and French President Emmanuel Macron have become avid fans of the sport.

Domestically, with over 200 padel venues and 650 courts across the country, the Padel explosion is equally staggering, with an estimated 300 000 to 350 000 active padel players in South Africa, currently on record. And, predictions are that number is set to rise.

There are several factors contributing to the growth of the sport, among them:

- **Accessibility:** Padel is easy to learn and can be enjoyed by people of all ages. A hybrid of tennis and squash, Padel is a fast-paced, social sport played on a smaller court with walls, making it accessible to players of all ages and skills levels.
- **Sociability:** Padel is a sociable sport, making it a great way to meet new people.
- **Access to lessons and equipment:** Many clubs offer lessons and equipment rentals, making it easy to get started.
- **Teambuilding and Corporate Events:** Many companies are using Padel for teambuilding and corporate events.
- **Celebrity Endorsements:** High-profile athletes and influencers are helping to promote Padel.

Where to play

Padel courts are sprouting across the country, with a concentration in Johannesburg and Cape Town. Major cities like Pretoria, Durban, Knysna, George, Plettenberg Bay and Gqeberha, also have Padel clubs.

In addition, many clubs are affiliated with gyms or sports facilities like Virgin Active or Planet Fitness, offering access to several clubs in Johannesburg and Cape Town. Companies like Africa Padel, ClubPadel and Virgin Active Padel Club are considered instrumental in developing the sport's infrastructure and promoting its growth.

Challenges and limiting factors

With players being required to fork out around between R300 to R500 per hour (racket hire can range between R30-R50 per person), securing play time on a double court means that Padel remains an elite sport, with a significant portion of players from high-income households.

And, this is not unique to South Africa. Similarly, to hire a Padel court in Europe, will cost you around 20-40 euros per hour, while in the USA, you will pay between \$30-\$60 per hour.

In addition, investors may face challenges in securing suitable locations and making a profit, especially with some clubs operating at low occupancy rates.





A standard court needs 20m x 10m, proper drainage, a north-south orientation and ample secure parking. Plus, outdoor courts face their own share of challenges, as weather conditions such as extreme heat, wind and rain can eat into profitability, especially for the increasingly popular rooftop setups. This, according to Daily Maverick (13 Feb 2025).

Then there's the cost. Building a single court – excluding land – runs anywhere from R600,000 to R1-million, the article cites.

The article goes on to say that although the early adopters of padel were cashing in, paying off their courts within a year thanks to their 70% occupancy rates, things have shifted.

Most South African padel courts now operate at just 30% to 50% occupancy, according to Roger Barrow, general manager of the Padel Building Company, speaking on the podcast The Corner Office.

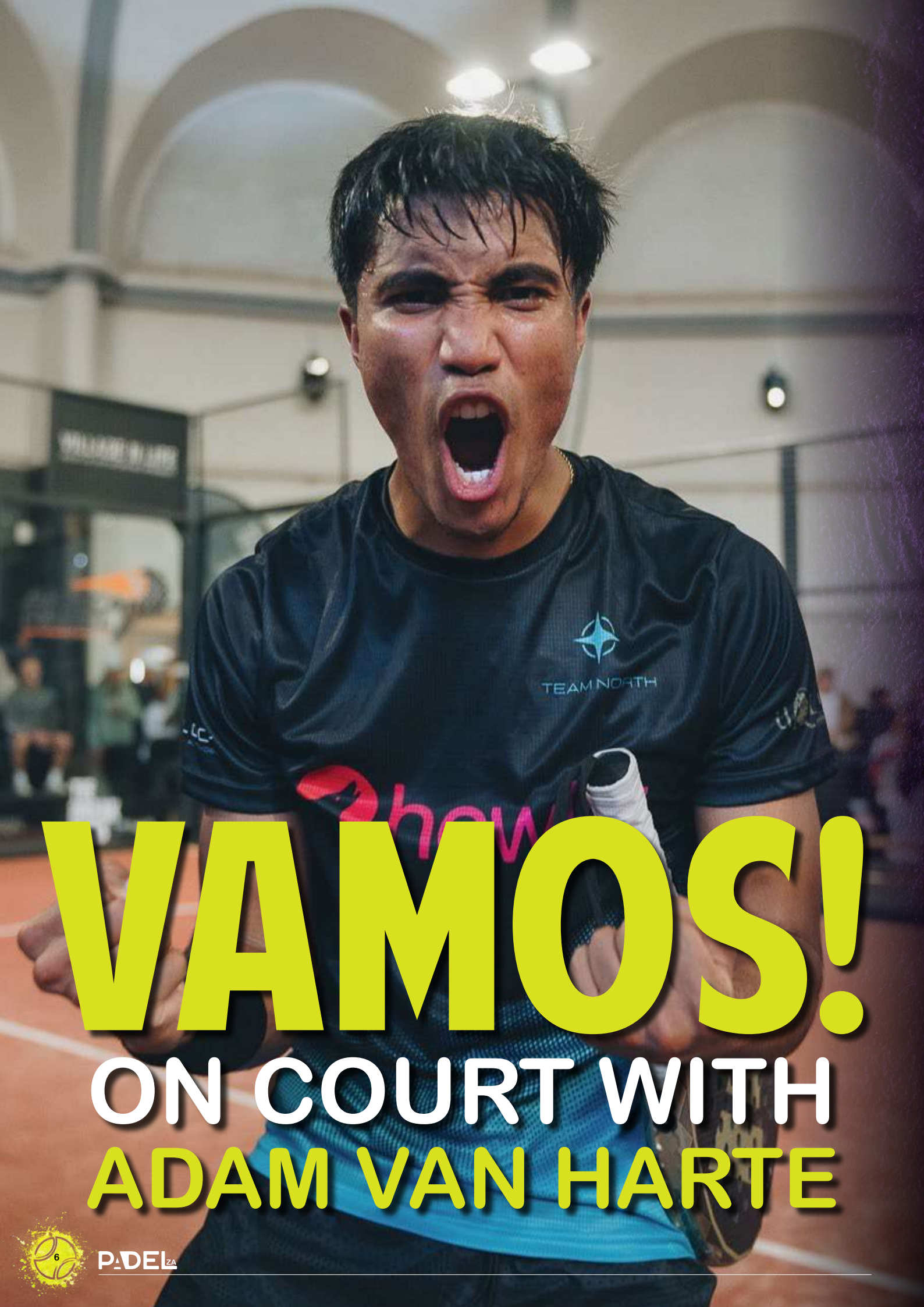
To push beyond 60% occupancy, the courts would need to fill off-peak hours (1pm to 3pm or even after midnight), whereas as it stands, the real money is made in two prime windows: 5am to 8.30am and 4pm to 10pm.

Whether real or perceived, there are hurdles for clubs and investors to overcome, but this is unlikely to detract from the overall growth of the sport.

Suffice to say, the game of Padel is here to stay. Who would have thought, that a fun pastime invented by Spanish

husband-and-wife-duo, Enrique and Viviana Corcuera back in 1969, as a way to avoid boredom on holiday, would be taking the world by storm, 56 years later!

“To push beyond 60% occupancy, the courts would need to fill off-peak hours.”



VAMOS!

**ON COURT WITH
ADAM VAN HARTE**



Adam van Harte, 24, is an emerging star in South African padel, known for his powerful game and commanding court presence. He has represented South Africa internationally, participating in events like the A1 Padel tour in Sweden and the Maximos Cup.

His signature move is a formidable smash. Van Harte plays with the adidas Metalbone CTRL 3.4 racket, which complements his precise and controlled style. His transition from tennis to professional padel highlights his dedication. Beyond his athletic skill, his charisma and sportsmanship have made him a popular figure in the padel community, marking him as a significant player to watch on the global stage.

Can you tell us a bit about yourself and how you got into padel?

My name is Adam van Harte, I'm 24 years old and I'm a professional padel player. My padel journey started in late 2022 when a friend of mine invited me to my first. My first couple of games were purely social but I realised that I had some potential in the sport.

What was your first experience with padel like?

The first thing I noticed about the sport was how fun it was! At first I thought it was very similar to tennis but the more I played and learnt the more I realised it was very different.

When did you realise you wanted to take padel seriously and compete at a high level?

At no particular point. I think I just grew with the sport. The sport has taken such a crazy trajectory over the last couple of years so I'm just trying to keep up.

CAREER & PERFORMANCE

What has been the highlight of your padel career so far?

Playing my very first international tournament, the A1 Masters in front of my home crowd in Cape Town.

Which tournament or match are you most proud of, and why?

Winning my first major tournament, The SA Nationals at the end of 2024 and the repeating it and winning it again in 2025.

How do you prepare mentally and physically before a big match?

I like to listen to music about an hour before the match to zone in and concentrate. These tournaments see quite a lot of people attending to watch so it's important to me to forget about all of that and lock in.

What does your weekly training schedule typically look like?

Typically I train with my partner about three to four times a week and then try to play at least two to three practice matches. With this I usually include three to four gym sessions depending on my load for the week.

“The growth over the past year has been incredible and I think there is still much more to come.”



THE SPORT & GROWTH IN SA

How would you describe the current state of padel in South Africa?

The growth over the past year has been incredible and I think there is still much more to come. With major brands and investments coming in I think the future is incredibly bright for the sport.

What do you think needs to happen to grow the sport even more locally?

I think that establishing a federation is essential to the growth of the sport.

CHALLENGES & TRIUMPHS

What has been your biggest challenge in your padel journey so far?

Transitioning fully into a professional athlete while trying to balance my coaching schedule. Coaching is still a huge form of income for me, but we are seeing the demands to keep up in the sport increase so much that it becomes very tough to do both.



Follow Adam...



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How do you stay motivated during setbacks or injuries?

I think it's important to understand that there will be good moments and bad moments in my career and once you understand that, it makes it a lot easier. Being the person I am, luckily, I'm able to get over the setback fairly quickly and I use it to motivate me to become even better.

LIFESTYLE & OFF-COURT

What does a typical day in your life look like?

I usually wake up around 8am. I try to always have a good breakfast before I do my training on court and gym. In the afternoon, depending on my schedule, I will then do some coaching before I get home.

How do you balance padel with work, study, family, or social life?

I think it's very difficult. There is so much travelling that comes with the sport that it truly becomes your life. Luckily I enjoy this life the most, being busy and on the road so for me it doesn't faze me too much.

Who are your biggest supporters or influences, on and off the court?

My parents, for sure. I speak to them a lot especially when I need to make any big decisions in my life.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

What goals do you still hope to achieve in padel?

Right now I'm working hard to improve my international ranking by trying to play in more international tournaments. The ultimate goal for me would be to compete at the Olympics hopefully in 2032.

Where do you see yourself, and the sport in the next five years?

I see myself well established on the international circuit and to be a prominent figure within the sport in South Africa.

FUN / PERSONAL TOUCH

What's your go-to song or ritual before a match?

Hip hop music is usually my go to music before a big match.

Do you have any favourite courts or venues to play at?

All Virgin Active clubs, especially Lonehill, as I love playing indoor.

If you could play a match with any pro player (male or female), who would it be and why?

Arturo Coello - I am a very big fan of his! Being a left sided player, I think he is the best right sided player in the world and would make the game very easy for me (hahaha).

PERFECT YOUR PADEL SKILLS

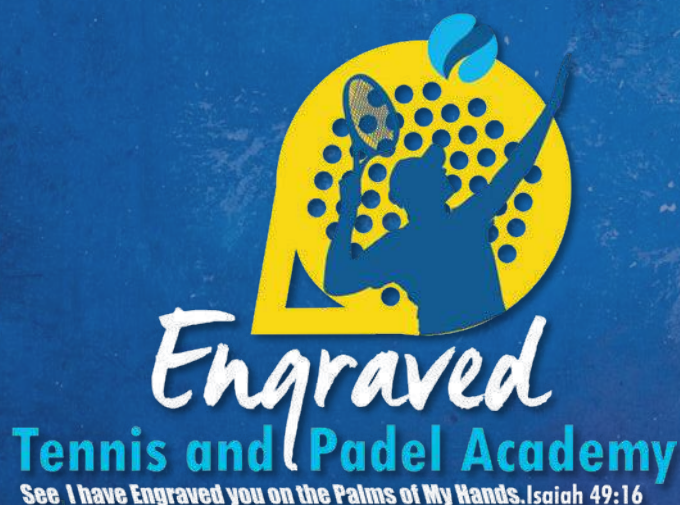
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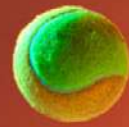
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Padel

Pitfalls

How to prevent injury

Padel has redefined physical activity, with young and older South Africans embracing the game in equal measure. That there is no age barrier, or required level of skill to take up the sport, is inducing even the former-sedentary among us, to get up off the sofa and take to the court.

Therein lies a major pitfall. Previously inactive individuals – particularly over the age of 40 – are more prone to injury, particularly if their enthusiasm happens to supersede their current physical stamina and fitness levels. So captivated are they by the game of Padel, say leading physiotherapists, that instead of easing into it, beginners are playing two-to-three times a week in some cases, often without warming up first.

“Many injuries are caused by over-enthusiasm, a strong competitive streak and the mistaken belief that what could be done at age 25, is still possible at age 55,” confirms Samantha Nupen, registered physiotherapist of Physio Dynamix - private practice based in Bryanston.

“Padel is a wonderful way to exercise, but as physios, we are seeing a lot of Padel injuries, ranging from quite serious acute injuries, to more repetitive strain type injuries,” she claims.

“These include devastating injuries such as complete ruptures of the Achilles tendon as well as ACL injuries in the knee, (a tear or sprain of one of the key ligaments that stabilise the knee joint),” adds Nupen. “Both types of injuries are common with deceleration, cutting and lunging movements, which are required when playing Padel. The repetitive injuries include ‘tennis elbow’, which is very common, especially if the Padel racket is too heavy or the grip size is incorrect for the player.

“We also see rotator cuff injuries in the shoulder caused by a combination of poor posture from sitting at a desk all day and thoracic spine stiffness, which limits the shoulder joint range and leads to impingement of the rotator cuff tendons,” says Nupen.

“More alarming still, I have even seen mild concussions from running into the wall or slipping on a wet court, which may cause the head to hit the ground. Lower back pain and lumbar disc irritation due to the lack of required rotation range, is also common in the older population.



Injuries include ruptures of the Achilles tendon, ACL injuries in the knee and rotator cuff injuries in the shoulder.

- Samantha Nupen

Do not ignore a potential injury. Even a small injury, if ignored, can become a bigger issue.

- Samantha Nupen



“When we first start playing this phenomenal game, no one tells us about potential injuries and ways to mitigate them, so we typically stumble through and learn as we get injured,” echoes Graham Craggs (61), league player at Match Padel, Cedar Square.

So, is there a way to prevent injury? Luckily, there are steps players can take to minimise their risk.

Warm up, warm up, warm up!

According to Craggs, who has been an avid player of the game for two years, arriving at the court 15 minutes before your start time, is strongly encouraged. “This involves more than knocking the ball around for five minutes,” he cautions. “Stretching is extremely important! Warm up the calves, hamstrings, thighs, as well as your racket arm. When you do start hitting the ball, do it gently at first, using this time to ‘warm up’ your focus and concentration.

Wear the right shoes

“Running shoes are not for Padel,” warns Craggs. I twisted my ankle twice in the first three months, wearing running shoes. You need something with firmer support, which a customised Padel shoe will provide.

Use the correct racket

Beginners would do well to start out with a lighter racket. Heavier rackets can cause strain on your arm resulting in ‘tennis elbow’.

In the game

When moving to the back of the court to return a lob, move sideways or turn and forward, not backwards. “I have seen a few catch their heel and fall over backwards (myself included), hitting their head hard,” says Craggs. “Communicate with your partner to avoid getting in each other’s way, by calling ‘my ball’, ‘your ball’, and so on.

Post game

Do not ignore a potential injury. Even a small injury, if ignored, can become a bigger issue. And, if you have been playing high intensity games in succession, consider taking a few days off to rest and recover. In short, listen to your body!

“The fitter you are, the less likely you are to pick up an injury,” Craggs concludes. “Concentrate on building your core strength and consider incorporating some runs or cycle rides into your workout routine. They will do wonders for your fitness, and contribute positively to your performance on the Padel court.”



Samantha Nupen, is a physiotherapist and the owner of Physiodynamix, a private physiotherapy practice in Bryanston with a special interest in ante- and post-natal women’s health, sports and musculoskeletal injuries, orthopaedics, back and neck pain, and headaches.

www.physiodynamix.co.za



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360 Padel Revolutionises Face of Padel in SA

Diamond League paves way for professional players to further their ambitions

When a core group of friends and competitive amateur cricketers began exploring alternative options to remain fit and keep up their athletic prowess, they had no way of knowing they were about to stumble onto a sporting activity that would not only enrich their lives, but would pave the way for an unprecedented, yet ultimately successful business venture.

Enter 360 Padel – a movement originally driven by Mohammed Majam (now Chairman of 360 Padel SA), and attended one Saturday by a random group of 10 to 12 like-minded fellows who were immediately drawn to the discipline, excitement and complexities of Padel. Encouraged by the response, Majam and his friend group quickly began organising some informal tournaments, the first of which was held at Pirates Club.

As word started getting around, the initial group mushroomed to 16, then 32, and eventually, to a 64-man tournament. The founders were building up a dedicated following and that spurred them to begin formalising their endeavour by putting together their first serious tournament at The Racket & Ball Club in Johannesburg.

Next, the 360 Padel team began focusing heavily on enhancing the player experience by way of prizes, advertising and activating registrations to their events, via their portal on IG bio, through which padel enthusiasts could secure their place at an upcoming 360 Padel event.

“Before long, we had 50 keen player-pairs on a waiting list,” claimed Sarfraz Bismilla, 360 Padel SA. “We then began focusing on the types of things people typically enjoy at a 360 Padel event, changed our trading name, (with 360 symbolising a perfect circle and inclusion for everyone), and adopted a tennis-based model, with four major events being staged throughout the year: Kings of Courts (end of February); PADL 1000 (end of June); The 360 Cup (end of September) and Summer Slam (end of November).



Recognising an appetite for leagues, we also created a league structure by providing teams with their own identity (similar to the IPL cricket model). This involved branding, colour schemes and much more. The market lapped it up, with the new initiative culminating in a grand, flashy launch, which further led to the 360 Padel League Player Auction, where team owners could purchase their players, via digital currency, in order to populate their teams.

By this time, the 360 Padel League - in conjunction with long-standing media partner, Discover Sport - had begun to achieve nationwide publicity, which was further enhanced last year at the launch of the 360 Padel League in Johannesburg – that announced the rollout of South Africa's first franchise-based league event.



Up till then, padel was predominantly played as a doubles sport. This was the first time that the concept of a 'team' was introduced in the sport whereby each team would be comprised of 12 players, of whom, only eight would play on match nights (four pairs of two), equipping teams with flexibility in terms of squad rotation and solutionising for player availability.

The opening of this major event was covered by Super Sport and was attended by the Gauteng MEC for Sport, Mr Matome Chiloane, who initiate the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Racket & Ball Club – a development that greatly contributed to elevating the 360 Padel brand, establishing it as a significant market player.

The Diamond League is born >>>>



Although 360 Padel initially targeted intermediate and low-level players, it did not take long for high-profile players to begin knocking on their door, claiming they too, wanted to be included.

"This was a pivotal moment for us," said Bismilla, "we knew we needed to expand rapidly and go big with this."

The first step of their expansion strategy involved the rollout of the 360 Padel League in Pretoria, which ran from January to May 2025 (this was followed by an announcement, this past weekend, that the 360 Padel League is coming to Durban.)

The 360 Padel team – via Super Sport and its current media partners then embarked on a dedicated campaign to create awareness for the new Diamond League, which would now provide these high-profile players with a legitimate platform to showcase their skills, with spectators able to watch these higher-ranking players slugging it out on the court.

More important, it led to the first commercial auction for South Africa's top 100 players to be purchased for hard South African Rands.



360 Padel are about to treat South African Padel audiences to an exhilarating event, in the form of the SA Invitational, which will see the likes of global-greats like Tapia, Coello and Galan fighting for court supremacy between 15-17th August, at the Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg.

Padel presence in South Africa



Activity +144K



Players +344K



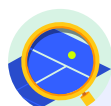
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LIFE IS BETTER WHEN WE PLAY TOGETHER

A full-page photograph of a woman, Debbie Van Aswegen, standing on a blue padel court. She is wearing a bright pink sleeveless top, patterned shorts, a black headband, and a watch. She is holding a black padel racket with a white logo. The background shows a black safety fence and a building with a red roof.

The Rise of a Racket Queen

Dominating South African Tennis and now Padel

Ever wonder what happens when a tennis prodigy discovers padel?

Meet Debbie Van Aswegen, who not only dominated the South African tennis scene but has now taken the padel world by storm.

Her first padel match was, by her own admission, “total chaos” – but that chaos quickly turned into a passion that led her to the very top. We dive into her inspiring journey, her competitive drive, and her vision for the future of padel in South Africa.

Can you tell us a bit about yourself and how you got into padel?

I’m a sports fanatic with a strong background in tennis. I started playing at the age of 6 and competed seriously until I was 21. During that time, I reached the No. 1 ranking in South Africa and was offered several scholarships to play tennis internationally – though I ultimately chose not to pursue them. My passion for racquet sports naturally led me to padel, and I’ve been hooked ever since.

What was your first experience with padel like?

Honestly, it was a disaster! I thought padel was just tennis with walls– so we tried playing it like a singles match. Total chaos. Hitting the ball at 200km per hour, misread every bounce and almost passed out from laughing (and running). But we had the best time and, of course, went back the very next day!

When did you realise you wanted to take padel seriously and compete at a high level?

It clicked pretty quickly for me. After just a few games, I realised padel wasn’t just a fun hobby – it had the same competitive spark that tennis gave me. Once I realised how fast the sport was growing and felt that fire to improve (padel is a whole different skillset), I knew I wanted to take it seriously and compete at a high level. That old competitive instinct kicked right back in!

What has been the highlight of your padel career so far?

I have so many – but so far definitely being one half of South Africa’s No. 1 padel couple! It’s been an incredible journey, both on and off the court. I’ve also learned that pressure is a privilege – competing at a high level pushes you to grow and I’ve come to really embrace that challenge.

Which tournament or match are you most proud of, and why?

I’m most proud of the SA Grand Open, where we successfully defended our title two years running. It’s basically the South African Championship now, with all the best players from around the country battling for the crown.

How do you prepare mentally and physically before a big match?

I’m not about to give away all my secrets (just kidding), but let’s just say I focus a lot on mental preparation... mostly by convincing myself I’m already winning before I even step on the court.

What does your weekly training schedule typically look like?

My weekly training schedule? Mostly just playing matches

I’m most proud of the SA Grand Open, where we successfully defended our title two years running.

– because there’s no better way to improve than being thrown into the action!

How would you describe the current state of padel in South Africa?

Padel in South Africa is really on the rise right now! The sport’s social and fast-paced nature makes it super appealing and we’re seeing players from all levels getting involved. There’s still lots of room to grow, especially amongst the juniors and schools but the future looks bright for padel.

What do you think needs to happen to grow the sport even more locally?

Introducing padel in schools to get young players involved early, is key. When kids grow up playing the sport, it builds a strong foundation for the future. Early exposure also makes it easier to develop talent and passion from a young age.

Do you feel there are enough opportunities for female padel players in SA?

Definitely, the opportunities are there, but we have to actively create them. Women shouldn’t be shy to step out, play the game, and compete. The more women get involved, the stronger and more inclusive the padel community will become.

What has been your biggest challenge in your padel journey so far?

My biggest challenge so far has been balancing work and padel. Both demand a lot of time and energy, so finding the right balance to train, compete and still handle work commitments has been tough – but it’s definitely taught me a lot about time management and prioritising what matters.

Have you faced any gender-based challenges in the sport?

I haven’t personally experienced major gender-based challenges in padel. However, I’m aware that in sports generally, women can face obstacles like less exposure and fewer opportunities. It’s important we keep pushing for equality, so everyone gets the chance to shine.

“Wherever the journey leads, I know padel will still be a big part of it.”

How do you stay motivated during setbacks or injuries?

When setbacks or injuries happen, I remind myself why I love the game in the first place. I rely heavily on my mental toughness to push through and stay focused on coming back stronger.

What does a typical day in your life look like?

Some days are absolute chaos, but honestly, every day is different. I just try to stay flexible and make the most of whatever comes my way – especially when it comes to fitting in padel!

How do you balance padel with work, study, family, or social life?

It's definitely a juggling act! Sometimes one thing has to take a backseat, but I try to stay organised and make time for what matters most.

Who are your biggest supporters or influences, on and off the court?

My biggest supporters are my family and close friends – they've been there every step of the way, cheering me on. On the court, I've been lucky to play with and learn from some incredible teammates and competitors. Off the court, the people who remind me to stay grounded and keep perspective have been just as important."

What goals do you still hope to achieve in padel?

I still have big goals in padel – I want to keep competing at the highest level in South Africa and eventually represent the country internationally. Beyond that, I'd love to contribute to growing the sport locally and inspiring more players, especially women, to pick up a racket and get on court.

Do you have plans to compete internationally?

Yes, it's official! My sponsors have confirmed that international competition is on the cards for 2026. I'm really excited for the opportunity and can't wait to represent and challenge myself at the next level.

Where do you see yourself – and the sport – in the next five years?

It's difficult to say – five years ago, I didn't even know padel existed! But looking ahead, I hope to still be competing, involved in the growth of the sport, and hopefully helping build a strong community of players in South Africa and beyond. Wherever the journey leads, I know padel will still be a big part of it.

What's your go-to song or ritual before a match?

I'm calm as long as I have my Bioplus in hand – after that, I'm basically a zen master... or at least I like to think so until the first serve!

Do you have any favorite courts or venues to play at?

I might get in trouble mentioning or not mentioning names, so let's just say any indoor court works perfectly for me – I'm happy as long as the roof's over my head!

If you could play a match with any pro player (male or female), who would it be and why?

Does it have to be padel? (laughing), because if not, I have a few tennis legends in mind! Tennis will always be my first love. Padel: Steffie Weterings ... No explanations needed ... Just magic.

Follow Debbie...



@debbie_v_aswegen



Debbie Van Aswegen



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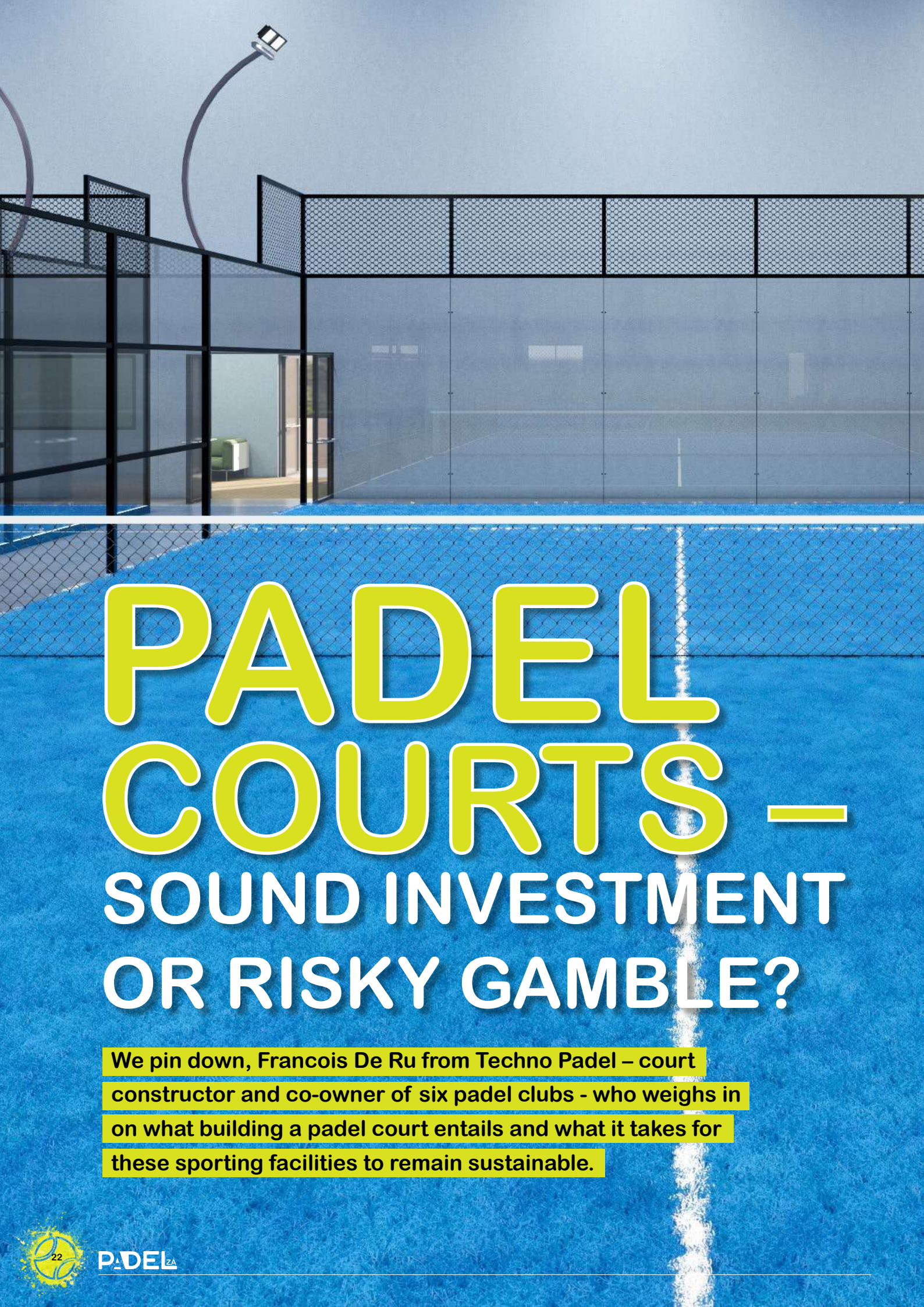
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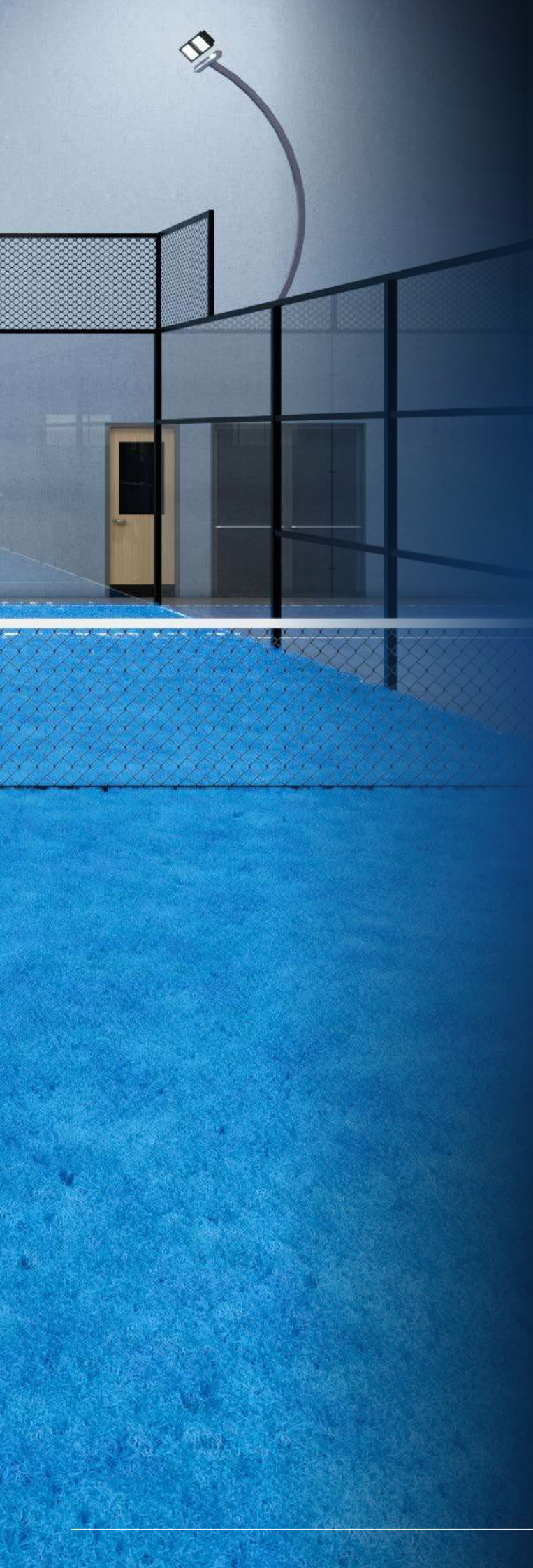
📱 **PADEL GQ**





PADEL COURTS – SOUND INVESTMENT OR RISKY GAMBLE?

We pin down, Francois De Ru from Techno Padel – court constructor and co-owner of six padel clubs - who weighs in on what building a padel court entails and what it takes for these sporting facilities to remain sustainable.



Tell us about Techno Padel and what inspired you to switch over from building steam rooms, saunas and jacuzzies, to building padel courts.

Techno Padel is an extension of our existing business, Techno Steam Sauna & Jacuzzi, which has been manufacturing jacuzzies, steam rooms, saunas, ice baths and other spa-related products for over 25 years.

Leveraging on our well-established infrastructure – originally built for spa and wellness projects – we seamlessly expanded into outdoor project development, including padel courts. This diversification did not require any additional overheads, as we utilised our existing resources and expertise.

When was the padel court side of the business established?

After extensive research, we placed our first order for four padel courts in June 2023 and installed our first two courts for a padel club in Boksburg, September 2023.

Subsequently, we have supplied and installed more than 140 padel courts across South Africa, as well as into Africa.

So, where does one begin when considering building a padel court for private use or residential applications?

The first thing would be to conduct your due diligence. Go with a padel company that is well established and has a proven track record. This is important for peace of mind in knowing that you are purchasing a quality product with the right after-sales service.

Due to a larger infrastructure and higher demand, market leading companies may not always be the cheapest, but building a padel club is a sizeable investment. Strongly consider purchasing piece of mind along with your courts.

What is the typical investment?

Costs are subject to the size of the club and the existing infrastructure available. A three-court club, with a fully-stocked pro shop, plus seating areas for spectators, could fall in the range of 2.75million to 3million.

On average, we would recommend an allocation of about R850 000-R900 000 per court.

What factors need to be taken into account when building a court, by way of initial construction and ongoing maintenance?

When installing a padel club you would typically need for it to be North/South facing, so that neither side is playing into the sun. Players tend to hit the ball out of the court time and again, so the surrounding terrain is equally important, so that players can retrieve their balls.



Avoid placing your padel court close to boundary walls, large slopes or bodies of water. Be mindful of client traffic, and wherever possible, try to position your padel courts in close proximity to parking, ablutions and the pro shop.

Also important, allow additional space for spectator seating (often, padel players will stay after a match to watch other competitors play). This promotes social interaction at club level, while catering for spectators enhances the overall experience at the club.

In terms of size, the average space allocation for a single padel court would be 14mx22m (this allows for a 10mx20m padel court with an additional 2m on either side of the court, as recommended by FIP (International Padel Federation)).

FIP also have clear stipulations regarding the glass, as breaking a 3m glass panel could result in serious injury. All glass installed by Techo Padel comes with glazing certification.

To answer your question regarding court maintenance, our Techno Padel staff conduct daily checks on the glass fasteners, frequently tightening them as they tend to loosen slightly. Left unattended, this could create issues.

And, of course, even though we use high-quality turf on our courts, it does not last forever. Frequently adding sand will extend the lifespan of the turf, but inevitably, the turf would need to be replaced every two-to-three-years

depending on foot traffic and maintenance intervals.

That being said, there is a fine line when it comes to maintenance, as over-sanding the courts will again affect the player experience by causing players to slip and slide over the courts, potentially causing injury.

What about indoor courts? What is required by way of ceiling height, lighting and ventilation?

Again, FIP guidelines when it comes to ceiling heights are stipulated as no lower than eight meters, however, if you were to speak with an avid padel player, you will learn that the higher the ceiling, the better. Because of this, the market norm has become 10m, at least.

Lighting would be much the same as that used for outdoor courts. As for ventilation, proper ventilation remains important for optimum player experience. The more comfortable the players, the more likely they are to return to your club.

How important is the flooring?

Padel courts require a proper base, as any imperfections on the base cannot be hidden by the turf. If the base has not been properly floated with a smooth finish, this could cause the ball to deviate or result in injuries like twisted ankles or bad falls.

And, again, this could translate into an unpleasant player experience that would most likely lead to players not frequenting your club.

How long does a typical installation take?

That depends heavily on the earthworks required. Once we have a level base to build from, it would take about one week for the slab to be trenched out, shutters to be placed, reinforcing to be installed and concrete to be cast. Once this process is complete, we can erect a padel court in about three days plus another three days to lay down, cut in, seam join and sand fill the turf.

Are you planning to build additional clubs?

We are always on the lookout for new opportunities and are currently in discussions for two exciting Techno padel clubs to be built this year.

Are your clubs affiliated with Virgin Active and Planet Fitness?

They are, indeed. At our Potchefstroom Club, we have tied up with Planet Fitness to offer their members discounted rates on our courts (we also intend implementing this at some of our other clubs). We have also tied up with Discovery Vitality. By being a Vitality member, you not only qualify for discounted rates, you also get to earn Vitality points whilst playing padel.

As an owner of six padel clubs, would you say the investment is worth the spend? If not, how can profitability be boosted?

We have been extremely blessed, with some of our clubs exceeding expectations. As in any business we try to keep our finger on the pulse at all times. Our individual club staff play such an important role in this, as they are at the coalface, interacting with the players that visit our clubs.

“By being a Vitality member, you not only qualify for discounted rates, you also get to earn Vitality points.”



**We are hopeful that
padel will become an
Olympic sport.**

With the backing of our head office and continually being focused on player experience and club marketing, our team has paved the way for Techno Padel to become profitable. Simply put, feet on the courts results in higher turnover.

What advice would you have for prospective investors looking to embark in a padel court venture?

As they say, location, location, location. Research the area in which you are looking to erect your club, as every club has varying needs and wants. Take into account factors such as: average income per household; population density; other sports facilities in the area; locations with existing infrastructure, like parking and ablutions.

Locations with existing infrastructure will help reduce your capital outlay, whilst also generating rental income for an existing establishment that gets to utilise open land (often these kinds of establishments already have a large following of clients, that you, as club owner, can tap into).

Padel is being described as an elite sport, for high-income individuals. Would there be a way to lower costs to make it more inclusive?

I cannot comment on this, as that is not our view. We are more inclined to believe that Padel is a fully-inclusive sport that allows for all ages and walks of life to play and enjoy. Our current off-peak rates are merely R50.00 per person for an hour's play.

More and more clubs are opening up all over, this will inevitably drive down pricing even further, as clubs start hustling for market share.

How high is the demand for padel courts, in your view?

Based on 2024 statistics by Playtomic, there are about 340 active clubs, 1039 courts and around 83 200 active player profiles on the app.

I believe those numbers will grow, and so too will demand for new clubs.

As to which areas of the country the demand will come from, is open to speculation.

We are hopeful that Padel will become an Olympic sport and once that happens, Padel as a whole, is bound to explode even further.



**Francois De Ru
from Techno Padel is
a court constructor
and co-owner of
six padel clubs.**

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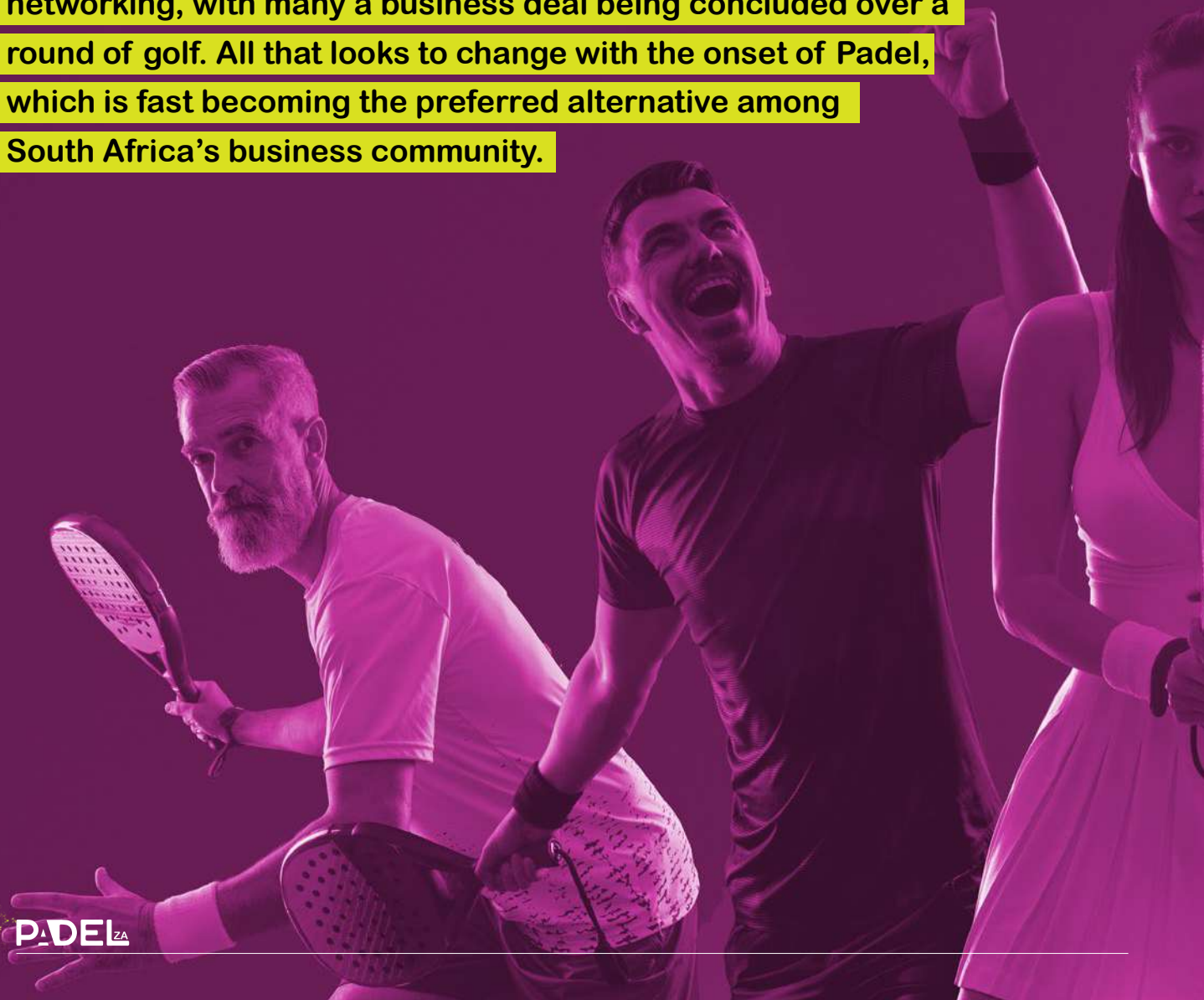
Padel

Gaining Momentum with Corporate South Africa

Historically, the golf course has proved an ideal platform for networking, with many a business deal being concluded over a round of golf. All that looks to change with the onset of Padel, which is fast becoming the preferred alternative among South Africa's business community.



PADELZA



There are several reasons for this, chiefly, its shorter match time, high-energy gameplay and the opportunities for team-building and client engagements. This, according to a Daily Investor report.

Time-efficiency is a major contributor to its rise in popularity among corporates, says the Daily Investor. While a padel match typically lasts 60 minutes, golf can take an entire day, thereby making padel more suitable for time-constrained professionals. What is more, the game is fun, promotes fitness and makes for greater social interaction.

Sponsors and event management companies are fast capitalising on the many opportunities Padel provides, and are hosting dedicated corporate padel events together with offering ad-hoc court branding opportunities.

Gina Read - no stranger to the golfing community courtesy of her successful enterprise, Cloud9Golf, and more recently, Cloud9Padel - had this to say: "There is no denying the appeal of padel, which is experiencing unprecedented growth in South Africa. Padel is not a passing fad. It is here to stay.



Sponsors and event management companies are capitalising on the opportunities padel provides via dedicated corporate padel events and ad-hoc branding opportunities.





We run Dunlop Demo Days for padel clubs running competitions or launches of new clubs, at no cost to them.

"I am seeing growing enthusiasm for the sport among individuals and corporates alike, particularly during my Dunlop Demo days.

As an ambassador for the Dunlop brand of padel rackets and balls, Read claims the demand for padel courts and padel gear is reaching fever-pitch.

Cloud9Padel hosts two Dunlop Fun Events per month on a Sunday for two different levels. During these events, padel players can try out the Dunlop range of rackets and balls, while enjoying complimentary Bene Spring waters and partaking in wine and champagne tasting, sponsored by BC Wines. The day concludes with the handing out of a few fun prizes for each level.

"We also run Dunlop Demo Days for Padel clubs which are running competitions or launches of new clubs (at no cost to them), and sponsor the Playing Balls, and prizes, among them Sunseal Sun Spritz sun care products" adds Read.

"As a padel player myself, I firmly believe that you need to try a racket, before you buy it, and these events are instrumental for showcasing the quality and affordability of the Dunlop brand.

"Our long-term vision for Cloud9Padel is to become a one-stop-shop for anything and everything padel, to host and promote both Corporate Events and Padel Tournaments and to cater for all our clients' branding needs by way of clothing, equipment and padel courts for events and tournaments," says Read.

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Get your game on

Tips on How to Improve Your Game

By "The Great White"

First in the Series, "The Great White" shares important tips for new players to the sport.

Basic Padel Tips for Beginners

If you're just starting out in padel, here are some key tips from The Great White to help you build a solid foundation and enjoy your game from day one:

1 CONTROL, Not Power

Unlike tennis, padel rewards control and placement over sheer power. Work on placing your shots smartly, especially into the corners and near the glass walls.



2 Master the GLASS

One of the biggest differences in padel is the use of the glass. Learn how the ball bounces off the glass and use this to your advantage. Letting the ball hit the glass before striking it can often give you better positioning and timing.



3 Choose the Right EQUIPMENT

Beginners often overlook the importance of the right racket. As a NOX-sponsored player, Craig recommends starting with a round-shaped racket for better control and comfort.



4 Play Regularly and Have FUN

Padel is meant to be fun and social. The more you play, the faster you'll improve. Don't be afraid to lose games or make mistakes – it's all part of the journey.



Craig White, widely known in the Gqeberha Padel community as **The Great White**, is a passionate padel player, experienced coach, and dynamic padel sales agent.

With a strong presence both on and off the court, Craig has become a notable figure in the sport. He is proudly sponsored by FAW Trucks Eastern Cape and NOX, two leading brands in both the automotive and padel world, which reflects his professionalism and impact within the sport.

Craig's athletic journey began with a strong foundation in both tennis and squash, two sports that helped shape his distinctive playing style. His background brings a unique edge to his padel game, allowing him to blend the power and precision of tennis with the agility and tactical intelligence of squash. This fusion has made him a formidable competitor and a highly respected coach.

Through Great White Padel, he not only provides coaching but also equips players with high-quality gear and expert advice, helping them navigate the growing world of Padel.

Follow The Great White on social media...

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TRI-CLAMP

Designed in 360° to provide an optimal structural reinforcement in the base of the bat for superior stability and excellent control, maintaining an aerodynamic open bridge area.

WRIST STRAP

Exclusive Dunlop branded adjustable wrist strap for maximum comfort and guaranteed safety during play.



Oh My Bat...

Let's dive into some of the cool padel rackets making waves in the market

*Prices listed as per manufacturer and may vary

HYKO Ola Maria

The HYKO Ola Maria padel racket features a round shape, medium EVA core, and full 3K carbon face. Built for effortless control, consistent feel, and smooth power. Its lightweight design, approximately 25g lighter than standard rackets, offers enhanced manoeuvrability without compromising performance.

Recommended Retail Price:
R1 999.00



HYKO 360 – GOLD

The HYKO 360 Gold padel racket, part of the exclusive AB de Villiers collection, features a diamond shape, soft EVA 13 core, 12K carbon face, and sandpaper-textured surface. Built for explosive power, high spin potential, and confident shot-making from every angle.

Recommended Retail Price:
R3 699.99



Dunlop Aero-star Team

This premium Carbon bat is designed for maximum consistency and superior performance in every shot. The Tri-Clamp reinforcement enhances stability, providing increased control while reducing drag for faster swing speeds and more powerful attacking shots. The exclusive Power Holes drilled pattern boosts power in your shots, and the Hyper Gryp textured finish increases spin for more penetrating and dynamic shots.

Recommended Retail Price:
R2 499.00



Dunlop Galactica Lite

Unlock unparalleled performance with this super-premium 350g bat, crafted with 16K Carbon for maximum consistency and shot accuracy. Designed for advanced players, the Tri-Max reinforcement ensures superior stability and control, while the exclusive Control Holes drilled pattern enhances precision. Extra Grip rough finish delivers superior spin for more penetrating shots.

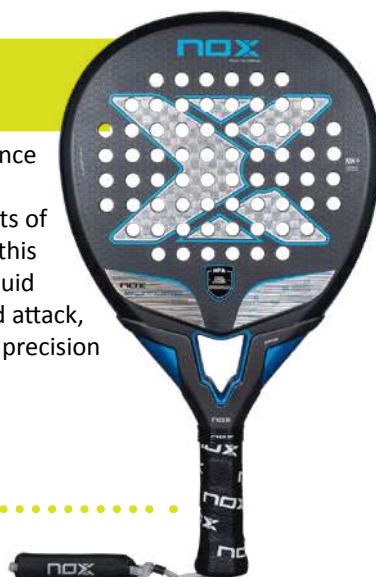
Recommended Retail Price:
R3 599.99



Nox Future Hybrid 12K Alum

Ideal for players looking for balance and versatility in their game. Designed for the emerging talents of the Nox Future Academy (NFA), this teardrop, carbon racket allows fluid transitions between defense and attack, adapting to every situation with precision and controlled power.

Recommended Retail Price:
R4 499.00



2025 NOX AT10 Genius 18K Alum

An evolution of the AT10 Luxury Genius series, designed for top-level performance. Featuring and 18K Alum Carbon surface, MLD Black Eva Core and exclusive spin, this racket delivers a perfect balance of speed and control with a comfortable feel.

Recommended Retail Price:
R5 999.00



2025 Babolat Counter Viper

Designed for the tactical counter-striker, this racket gives you what you need to control the game patiently and strike with power. Built with a larger sweet spot and Babolat's renowned technologies, this Counter Viper ensures no shot gets past you. Its round shape offers exceptional tolerance, while its updated features deliver more comfort and responsiveness.

Recommended Retail Price: R4 999.00



2025 Babolat Air Viper

Designed for advanced players who dominate the court with speed and precision. This premium racket combines cutting-edge technology and innovative materials to deliver the perfect balance of agility and power, making it your ultimate weapon for quick volleys and aggressive smashes.

Recommended Retail Price: R4 999.00



2025 Siux Trilogy Pro 5

Designed for advanced players seeking exceptional control and precision. With its round shape and low balance, this racket delivers maximum accuracy while ensuring stability in every shot. Its 100% carbon construction provides durability and a lightweight feel, while the fast recovery EVA core enhances responsiveness.

Recommended Retail Price: R5 299.00



2025 Siux Fenix Pro 5

A high-performance padel racket designed for advanced and professional players. With a diamond shape, high balance and 21K carbon surface, it delivers explosive power and precise control. Featuring a hard touch for accuracy and a 3D finish for enhanced spin, it is perfect for players demanding durability, precision and power.

Recommended Retail Price: R5 299.00



OFFICIAL AGENT



Craig White AKA The Great White

Padel Player | Coach | Agent - Gqeberha

+27 82 929 3909 greatwhitepadel @greatwhitepadel



The Power Behind Padel: Understanding SAPA's Vital Role

Padel ZA caught up with Paul Waldburger, an executive committee member of the South African Padel Association (SAPA), to chat about the vital importance of SAPA in the evolving South African padel landscape.

The South African Padel Association (SAPA) was formally established in 2019 with a clear mission: to cultivate and advance padel across the nation. Their ultimate aim is to secure official recognition for the sport in South Africa. Once recognised, SAPA plans to launch provincial and interprovincial leagues, host a national championship, and ultimately develop a highly competitive national team for international play.

What is SA Padel Association (SAPA) and how long has it been functioning for?

The South African Padel Association (SAPA), established in 2020, serves as the governing body for padel in South Africa, overseeing its growth, regulation, and related matters. A new Executive Committee was elected in April 2025.

Which individuals currently sit on SAPA? How did they get there?

The SAPA Executive Committee comprises six elected individuals: Paul Waldburger, Adam Closenberger, Yusuf Wadee, Debbie Van Aswegen, James Baber, and Daniel Biggs. These members were voted in by existing member clubs and serve as 'independents' to the padel industry, holding no financial or equity interests in padel-related ventures.

What are the main goals of SAPA?

The South African Padel Association (SAPA) is committed to building a vibrant and inclusive padel landscape across the nation. To achieve this, our key objectives include:

- **Fostering a United Padel Community:** We aim to actively engage with every padel club in South Africa, ensuring a fully informed and participatory community that collectively drives the sport's growth and development.
- **Driving Inclusive Padel Development:** We are dedicated to establishing and implementing a comprehensive national development plan, with a specific focus on expanding access to padel for underserved communities and demographics who have not yet had the opportunity to experience the sport.
- **Achieving National and International Recognition:** We will prioritize SAPA's registration with both the International Padel Federation (FIP) and the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC). This crucial step will enable us to formally award national South African colours to our deserving padel participants, recognizing their achievements on a national scale.
- **Building a Robust Competitive Framework:** We are focused on developing and implementing a comprehensive national ranking system and tournament schedule for padel in South Africa. A significant milestone within this framework will be the successful hosting of a fully sanctioned South African Padel Open in 2026.

While padel in South Africa has seen rapid growth thanks primarily to agile private investment, the sport is still merely

at “the tip of the iceberg.” To elevate padel to its next level, significant corporate and sponsorship involvement is essential.

This shift will create a massive multiplier effect, as major corporations typically require the sport to be properly regulated and governed by an official body like SAPA before committing investment. SAPA aims to build upon the impressive progress achieved to date and facilitate this anticipated exponential growth.

Why Clubs should partner with SAPA

SAPA's primary goal of growing padel nationwide directly aligns with the objectives of our member clubs. More players mean more business for club owners, creating a symbiotic relationship.

By hosting SAPA-sanctioned tournaments that offer ranking points, clubs gain significant advantages. These events instantly become more important, attracting greater participation and enhancing the club's profile. Furthermore, affiliation with SAPA opens doors for clubs to be integral parts of future provincial and national leagues.

Beyond the competitive benefits, being a SAPA member fosters crucial aspects like inclusivity, valuable information sharing, and a direct opportunity for clubs to contribute to the strategic direction of padel in South Africa. All of these advantages come with minimal downside, making SAPA membership a clear win for clubs.

Joining the South African Padel Association (SAPA)

Clubs interested in joining the South African Padel Association (SAPA) are encouraged to reach out directly to Paul Waldburger at info@sapadel.co.za or 083 635 7520 with their contact details.

Currently, there is no entrance fee for clubs to join SAPA. An annual membership fee will be introduced for 2026; however, the exact amount is still to be confirmed closer to that time, but is anticipated to be nominal.

**Please note that the SAPA website is currently undergoing reconstruction, and an update will be provided once it is fully operational.*



BECOME PART OF A THRIVING NATIONAL COMMUNITY!

The South African Padel Association (SAPA) is the official governing body dedicated to the sport's development, regulation, and expansion across the country.

There's currently NO entrance fee for clubs to join! An annual membership fee will be introduced in 2026, but it's expected to be nominal.

**REGISTER
NOW**

CONTACT:
Paul Waldburger
info@sapadel.co.za or
083 635 7520





Breakfast

is the most important meal of the day

How you start your day impacts how you feel for the rest of it.

Breakfast is often called 'the most important meal of the day', and for good reason. As the name suggests, break - fast breaks the overnight fasting that your body has experienced while you are sleeping. Breakfast replenishes your supply of glucose to boost your energy levels and alertness, while also providing other essential nutrients required for good health (granted you are having a healthy balanced breakfast)

Probably the most appealing benefit for people is that breakfast jumpstarts your metabolism and, thus, helps you burn more calories throughout the day. When you wake up and eat the right breakfast you're telling your body that there are plenty of calories to be had for the day. When you skip breakfast the message your body gets is that it needs to conserve rather than burn any incoming calories. So your body immediately goes into what we call your fat storage mode; and we don't want that to happen.

Do you struggle to eat breakfast in the morning?

Figuring out why you can't face food in the morning can be tricky. Sometimes it's just a bad habit—you've never been a breakfast eater. And since you manage to get through your morning okay, you just tell yourself you don't really need to eat.

Maybe you aren't hungry in the morning or maybe you simply don't like breakfast food or you just rely on caffeine to get you going. Either way it's really important for you to get this habit right; it will change so much in how you feel and will really have a profound impact on how you eat for the rest of the day.

Here are some tips:

Start small and light

Ease into the habit with small portions of easy-to-digest foods that are nutrient-rich. Try a meal replacement shake or some fruit and some plain yoghurt. Always, always include a protein!

Get up 15 minutes earlier

An extra 15 minutes in the morning can make all the difference to those who are rushed to get out the door. You'll not only have time to make something quick, you'll also give your system a chance to wake up. I recommend having your breakfast within 30 minutes of waking.

Don't rely on just coffee and a muffin

Many people think they're not really eating breakfast when they grab 'just a coffee and a pastry' at the coffee store. But that innocent looking coffee drink coupled with a pastry or "healthy" muffin could dump more than 700 calories and 6 teaspoons of grease into your system! Coffee also dehydrates your body, which is not good for your energy. So skip the pastry and have a good decent breakfast BEFORE you leave the house.



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THE LADIES TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT

In a sport that's growing at lightning speed, one thing was becoming increasingly clear: the women were showing up, but the spaces for them to shine simply weren't. And so, Friday Night Lights was born.

Whether you're stepping onto the court for the first time or you've already found your groove, FNL offers a place where skill, spirit, and sisterhood collide. It's not just another tournament — it's a celebration of women who play hard, connect deeply and light up the courts every time they show up.

How it started

As female players in a male-dominated padel landscape, the same question is always asked... Why aren't there more tournaments for women? Week after week, clubs hosted packed events for men and mixed categories, but the ladies' brackets were always missing. When asked why, the responses were always the same: "Ladies' events don't work." "We can't fill the category." "Women don't want to commit." But Carla Howitz and Monsi Pla - Bou, who started this amazing initiative didn't buy it. They knew the desire and talent were there — what was missing was a structure that actually considered the lives and needs of female players.

So, they flipped the script and designed something just for the ladies — not a side event, not a filler, but a platform built from the ground up for women. They considered the real-life demands of our players: limited free time, family responsibilities, and the need for something both social and competitive. By limiting the number of teams and hosting it on Friday nights — a time that worked for women and their families — they found the sweet spot, and so Friday Night Lights (FNL) was born — and it's been growing ever since.

What its about

- Real prizes. Real cash pools. Real connections.
- Monthly to biweekly events that bring together talent, energy, and fun.
- All levels welcome, from beginners to seasoned players.

At FNL, the courts are alive with laughter, competition, and community. It's padel with purpose — a space for women to show up fully, play hard, and walk away with more than just a scoreline.

Every edition adds to a growing movement. The lights come on, the music plays, and a diverse group of women from across the city take their place on court — not just to compete, but to connect, uplift, and inspire.

What's the vision

As the FNL family grows, the duo are welcoming sponsors and partners who share their vision — to empower women through sport, build community, and champion change in the padel scene. This isn't just a tournament. It's Friday nights done right. Bring your game. Bring your energy and light it up.

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Friday Night Lights



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PRIZE FOR 1ST AND 2ND PLACE - CASH PRIZE FOR 1ST AND 2ND PLACE - CASH PRIZE FOR 1ST AND 2ND PLACE - CASH PRIZE FOR 1ST AND 2ND PLACE - CASH PRIZE FOR 1ST AND 2ND PLACE

What's Happening

We want to list your news and events... get in touch with us today!

Techno Padel - Walmer

- **28 June:** Finmap Cash Prize Series 2

Techno Padel - Heidelberg

- **5 July:** Ryder cup – Heidelberg vs Potchefstroom
- **12 July:** Ryder cup – Heidelberg vs Boksburg

For more information: Techno Padel - 083 842 2501

Techno Padel - Modderfontein

- **2 August:** Ryder cup – Modderfontein vs Heidelberg.

For more information: Techno Padel - 083 842 2501

J-Bay Padel

- **18 - 20 July:** J-Bay Padel Competition, Surf Village

For more information - 064 990 9574

Friday Night Lights

- **4 July:** New Era Padel, Gqeberha

For more information - 082 057 6052

Engraved Padel Over 40s Men's Tournament

- **5 July:** Trend Entertainment Centre, Gqeberha

For more information - 076 290 1966



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Information and dates supplied independently. PadelZA will not be held liable for incorrect information supplied or date/event changes.



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